

From: rich mycroft
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Re: MS Settlement

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As someone who has spent the last 16 years in the software industry, who has worked on everything from tiny embedded systems to mainframes, I find the proposed 'settlement' to be ludicrous. The idea that an organization that is a convicted, law-breaking monopolist should get such a light set of restrictions is almost beyond belief. Microsoft has done almost nothing in the way of innovation, but they are extremely good at tying everything under the sun into Windows and the proposed settlement does nothing to alter or restrict that behavior. I have worked on Microsoft systems as well as many other systems and as a technologist I can plainly state that their success has nothing to do with the technical capabilities of their products but a great deal with their ability to use their financial and marketing muscle to restrict and destroy alternative technologies they feel might encroach upon their monopoly - and this was clearly stated in the decisions from the two courts. There was a time when I championed the Microsoft products as they seemed designed to give the average user more ability to do useful things with their personal computer systems, but over the last decade or so it has become apparent that they are now simply trying to find new ways to milk yet more money out of the consumers of the world while delivering products that are so shoddy that even the FBI has to call them up to inquire about the latest security holes. That the current administration via John Ashcroft can seriously submit this so called settlement is almost beyond comprehension. I hope the court will see past Mr. Ashcroft's lack of desire to enforce a section of the law he evidently does not find appealing and in so doing create the real opportunity for technologists in this country and around the world to truly push for innovations. The alternative is to merely protect Mr. Gates and his monopoly.

Richard Mycroft